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EDUCATION AND AWARENESS TRANSFORMING THE WORLD WITH ACTION AND REFLECTION IN THE VISION OF EDGAR MORIN

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Abstract: Education is a continuous process of development of the physical, intellectual and moral faculties of the human being in the broadest sense, it permeates the informal space experienced by man originating from family life throughout life, in the non-formal space through experienced situations, experienced in socialization with others and in the formal space through school, it is being established in an institutionalized way, systematized with school experiences that allow changes and awareness that will serve to transform society. Given this fact, this article makes a theoretical approach on the importance of education, human development and interdisciplinarity according to Edgar Morin. In remote moments, Edgar Morin leaned towards the area of education, becoming recognized for the fact of exerting influence with his philosophical position in debates and critical appreciation regarding education abroad and in Brazil. Faced with such a scenario, we sought to know some basic points of his thought for education as a way of adding values that stimulate human development. To achieve this goal, analyzes were made on education and interdisciplinarity, points within the perspective of Edgar Morin.

Keywords: Education. Human development. Awareness. Transformation.

INTRODUCTION

Edgar Morin is an author who greatly contributes to a better understanding of the human condition. In this sense, his consideration helps to overcome the deterministic epistemological bases, connecting the human being with the ignored humanity, thus promoting solidarity and ethics.

He proposes a reflection that shows a new challenge: thinking about how education

can contribute to building alternatives that integrate scientific culture and humanist culture in the pursuit of human development.

Therefore, it is relevant to understand how educational action from the perspective of complexity can open the frontiers of knowledge and integrate knowledge within a new ethics that leads to development in a more humane way.

Morin's elucidations suggest a reconnection of human diversity, in order to place it solidly on Planet Earth. Education is inserted in a multifaceted space, therefore, it is important to understand the complexity of this space to educate the human being.

One of the main challenges of education lies in the fact of preparing human beings for the future and for the uncertainty that surrounds it. For this, it is essential to think about how educational work can bring together scientific culture and humanist culture; how it can be polydisciplinary¹ and interdisciplinary². Reflection on education puts us in front of complexity, a place of connections, a space where values are related to the environment, ethics, humanization.

The *complex thinking* presented by Edgar Morin presents its relevance, as it aims to gather knowledge, understand the human condition and its connections with life in society.

The crisis of man with ecology that is experienced in contemporary times, becomes a moment of deep reflection about the model of civilization, the destiny of life on Planet Earth. The great challenge is to reestablish the links with planetary life, ignored in the evolutionary process of scientific thought. This challenge consists of understanding what generates the borders to work towards the reconnection of knowledge.

1. Polydisciplinarity is characterized by the "association of disciplines around a project or an object that is common to them". (Morin, 2002, p.48)

2. Interdisciplinarity can be defined as joint work between plural disciplines that promote an integrated study of an object. (Durand, 1993).

EDUCATION AND MAN FROM EDGAR MORIN'S VISION

According to Morin, educating is above all, understanding the human condition; understanding the connections where life is established. Thus, "to understand the human is to understand its unity in diversity, its diversity in unity. It is necessary to conceive the unity of the multiple, the multiplicity of the one" (MORIN, 2000, p. 55). In this sense, education is understood as a process where the individual, through learning, builds his scientific knowledge, understands himself, deepens the understanding of the human condition and earthly life, prepares himself to be and live on Earth.

Morin questions the lack of depth on the human condition of Education programs. He comments that the "human condition is totally absent from current teaching, which disintegrates it into disjointed fragments" (MORIN, 2007, p. 18). She suggests that education must work towards raising awareness and the meaning of human beings, solidarity between natural sciences and humanistic culture, promoting the integration of disciplines. Regarding the natural sciences, the author comments that they "allow us to insert ourselves into our Planet and within the biosphere. The biological sciences allow us to situate ourselves in the evolution of life" (Ibid., p. 19). In the case of the human sciences, their contribution would be in the sense of "leading us to discern between our individual destiny, our social destiny, our historical destiny, our economic destiny, our imaginary, mythical or religious destiny" (Ibid., p. 19).

The knowledge produced by the natural sciences deepened and broadened the understanding of the condition of human beings in the world. It revealed to us multidimensional and complex aspects of the constitution of the human being.

Biological research, for example, promoted important advances for the understanding of human beings in the biosphere. This deeper understanding not only promoted the encounter between Biology, Physics and Chemistry, but also enabled the reconnection of knowledge and the understanding of the complexity of the human condition. Biology has revealed unknown aspects of the human being. In the case of Molecular Biology and Genetics, it was possible to know in depth the organization and structure of human life, as well as its connection with the Earth. Biological understanding, the birth and death of cells, relates human beings to a Planet that is in constant regeneration. The understanding of the human being is interconnected to the Earth, to the Universe. The particles that make up the human organism, such as carbon atoms, are present in the living self-organization of Planet Earth.

This way, the understanding of the human condition is connected to the complexity of planetary life. Terrestrial life is also cosmic. We are, from the same sun, from the thermodynamic metamorphosis of several suns. Morin suggests that "To know the human being is, above all, to place him in the Universe, and not to separate him from it" (MORIN, 2000, p. 47). For him "the human being is in nature, nature is in the human being". This way, life is a complex relationship yet to be understood:

The living being is an entirely physical-chemical machine, but, organized in a more complex way, it is endowed with qualities and properties unknown in the molecular world from which, however, it emerged: the qualities expressed by the term life (MORIN, 2007d, p. 26).

The interdisciplinary dialogue between Biology, Physics and Chemistry promoted the integration of knowledge, which is fundamental to restore the complex unity

of human beings and life. The connection of knowledge is essential to understand the human condition, as well as the understanding of its anthroposocial connection and its terrestrial rooting.

The human being is a living being who, based on his organizational and cognitive aptitudes, creates new forms of life, psychic, spiritual and social: the life of the “spirit” is not a metaphor, nor the life of myths and ideas; nor the life of societies (MORIN, 2007d, p. 30).

The conception of the human being, hegemonic in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, was established by rationality (*Sapiens*), by technique (*Faber*) and by activity (*Economicus*).

The determinist and mechanistic view anchors the understanding of the human from some isolated principles to the detriment of the exclusion of others. Through a deeper reflection it is possible to understand the influence of these conceptions in the current model of civilization, as well as in social relations. For example, when we request information about a certain person, we are immediately informed, above all, about his profession, his family, where he lives and his socioeconomic situation.

The information demonstrates that the conception of the human being and its bonds are based on a rationalizing paradigm. For complexity theory, the human condition contains uncertainty, dark psycho-affective depths, the uncontrollable, madness. Human creation springs from wisdom and madness, from the empirical and the imaginary, from the prosaic and the poetic.

Thus, human beings not only live on rationality and technology; he wears himself out, surrenders, dedicates himself to dances, trances, myths, magic, rites [...] Everywhere, a technical, practical, intellectual activity testifies to empirical-rational intelligence; everywhere, feasts, ceremonies, cults

with their possessions, exaltations, waste, consumerisms, bear witness to *Homo ludens, poeticus, consumans, imaginarius, demens*” (MORIN, 2000, p. 59).

The difficulty in understanding the mystery of life and the great questions of humanity lies in the look that sees only the individual disconnected from his whole. Upon concluding Method V, The Humanity of Humanity, (2007d, p. 291), Morin expresses the difficulty of weaving what the Human Being is: “The human mystery is linked to the mystery of life and the mystery of the cosmos, because we carry in us life and the cosmos”. To understand the human condition, it is necessary to know the homo complexus, that is, the human being in his complex reality, visible and invisible, in his home (the Earth) and in his dwelling (the Universe).

The understanding of homo complexus, according to Morin, is structured in the sapiens-demens bipolarity, in which reason and madness co-participate in the direction of the human trajectory. The human being embraces rationality and foolishness at the same time (hubris). (MORIN, 2007, p. 302).

We can understand the multifaceted aspects, for example, changes in mood. In the case of balancing emotions, it is necessary to be constantly vigilant, that is, it is a daily task. We need to work every day to be well, to treat others well, and to think well. Every day new choices alter the trajectory of human life. The human being is the one who decides for creation or destruction.

If homo is at the same time sapiens and demens, affective, playful, imaginary, poetic, prosaic, if he is a hysterical animal, possessed by his dreams and yet capable of objectivity, calculation, rationality, it is because he is homo complexus (MORIN, 2007, p. 140).

Human rationality (sapiens) navigates amidst a sea of uncertainties (demens).

Certainty, the claim of reason, is based on the unknown, on the mystery. Rationality takes place in a bio-chemical-electrical brain. This relationship contains the possibility of precision and imprecision. From this relationship we can also understand cases of mood swings, personality changes, feelings of love and hate, and other human behavioral changes. The brain works in a biological body, which undergoes various interferences; be they physical, chemical, biological, psychological or social. According to Morin (2007, p. 98):

The brain is a bio-chemical-electrical machine. Unlike the computer, the mind works in a game, combining precision and imprecision, uncertainty and rigor, and crosses recollection, computation, cogitation. As it is extraordinarily complex, the spirit/brain works with, through and against noise, which entails enormous risks of errors, illusions, madness, but also prodigious chances of invention and creation.

According to Morin (2007d, p. 51), the human being is conceived as “[...] trinity individual/society/species: the individual is a term of this trinity”. The biological and cultural characteristics in which the human being is generated act in a cyclical way, where regeneration and recommencement is recursive and permanent. The individual/society/species relationship is the encounter in which: “To this multiplicity of personalities, in our civilization, is added the multiplicity of social roles; sometimes, the two intersect” (Ibid., p. 90).

The participation of culture in the conception of the human condition is decisive, because “the human being, without it, would be a primate of the lowest rank” (Ibid., p. 35). The knowledge brought by biology, physics and chemistry revealed our human condition and earthly identity. For a more in-depth knowledge, it is also necessary

to understand it in its socio-cultural context. Social relations are retroactive, individuals interact in complex ways.

AWARENESS AND TRANSFORMATION

The human being transcends his animality in social relationships, in relationships with others, in the expression of love, in ethical and solidary action. There is a relationship of interdependence between the biological and the cultural. Regarding this issue, Morin suggests the inseparability of the terms brain, culture and spirit. What the human intellect produces, it produces from triune relationship: brain-culture-spirit. For him “the human individual, in his own autonomy, is, at the same time, 100% biological and 100% cultural” (MORIN, 2007, p. 53).

The human condition finds in the biological/cultural dialogic, opening for the understanding of the complexity in which it is involved. However, the fact of having culture, being cultured, does not necessarily mean being free from the risks of dementia, madness. Culture is a very important factor in the humanization process, especially in the action to control dementia and human madness.

The connection between what is essentially biological and what is essentially cultural (social) happens through the use of language. “Man is made in the language that makes him” (MORIN, 2007, p. 37). Edgar Morin understands that language (human expression) is the encounter between homo sapiens (reason); Homo demens (madness/dementia); Homo ludens (playful, game of life); Homo economicus (economic profits); Homo poeticus; Homo faber (worker); Homo prosaicus (prosaic); Homo mythologicus (mythological). But, for that, we need an anthroposocial science, which works through the connection.

The understanding of being human carries with it the marks of the Cartesian paradigm. We still understand ourselves based on fragmentation, on patterns established by the Cartesian paradigm. It is important to understand “HOMO” in its singular and multiple aspects. In this sense, education is one of the important and decisive sectors of the humanization of the human being. Through the educational process, the individual gets to know himself, deepens the understanding of the multiple facets of the human condition, as well as learning to live on Planet Earth.

There is unity in human diversity, diversity in human unity. Unity is not only in the biological traits of the species *homo sapiens*. Diversity is not only in the psychological, cultural, social traits of human beings. There is also a properly biological diversity in human unity, and a mental, psychic, affective unity. This unity/diversity ranges from autonomy to myth (MORIN, 2007d, p. 65).

In order to educate, it is essential to understand the human condition in its physical, biological, psychic, cultural, social and historical range, that is, to re-signify humanity, re-establish the complex unit: individual-society-species. The human condition involves uncertainties, improbabilities and bipolarity *homo sapiens-demens*. We find in some epic stories and in some artistic expressions, the effort of human thought to describe the invisible and understand the diversity of characters that inhabit the human being.

Cinema, for example, portrays human diversity through the dialogue and emotions of its characters. The scenes reveal the invisible forces that sometimes turn into monsters that subdue rational intelligence. The actors in their representations reveal aspects of intelligence, affectivity, foolishness, imagination, reason and madness.

Morin suggests to scientific thought that it sympathize with the arts, literature and cinema, to overcome the difficulties in understanding human beings and, consequently, in their objectification; to deepen the *sapiens-demens* relationship, as well as their marks in human history. We find ourselves in a historic moment devoid of subterfuge. It is necessary to understand the human condition in depth in order to promote humanization and the construction of an ethical, solidary Planet.

The dialogical *sapiens-demens* it took an unbridled and turbulent pace with the development of historical societies, which destroyed self-regulated archaic societies. The *hubris* were actualized in human history in the form of noise and fury, of conquests, of massacres and destructions, of excessive ambitions and thirst for power; the avalanches of love and hate between individuals, the execrations, anathemas and aggression between religions and nations; and also the advances of reason in philosophy and the sciences; hence the wandering, inconstant, often demented aspect of human history (MORIN, 2007d, p. 127).

It is important to understand the human condition, freed from its masks and deviations, in tune with the earthly and open identity to learn to live on the Planet. To this end, Morin proposes affectivity as a form of mediation between the visible and the invisible, between reason and madness. Affection, which has the capacity to move, is present in the manifestations of intelligence, illuminating or blinding; in mathematical thinking, where passion can promote or override consciousness. Affectivity is present throughout the knowledge construction process. For the author, “[...] affectivity must be the link between the *homo sapiens e homo demens*” (MORIN, 2007d, p. 120).

This way, he suggests that human beings cultivate love, as it tends to deify, as opposed to

hate, which is to demonize (divide). According to his reflection, “[...] love is a vital need of the newborn, which seems to be rocked, caressed, treated with maternal smiles”. (Ibid., p. 122).

In this sense, maternal love is relevant, which is very important for the psychic and physical development of human beings. In the case of interpersonal relationships, the use of affectivity, in the form of cordiality and sympathy, favors communication and mutual understanding. Establishing the link between *homo sapiens* and *homo demens* is something important to be done, so that delirium and foolishness do not determine human conduct and action. For this, the analyzed author suggests that education work through self-criticism, solidarity, the affective bond between human beings and the Planet.

Culture and society present themselves as ways of controlling the destructive aspects of the human condition. Education, in this context, constitutes one of the important sectors of society, as it participates vertically in the human being's formation process. Awareness of the existence of the other is one of the important aspects of this control that must be taken into account. It can be built from an ethical reflection, which also deepens the responsibility and interference of human action in the life of Planet Earth. This is one of Morin's concerns and bets:

Culture and society prohibit the destructive impulses of hubris, not only through the punishments of the law, but also by introducing, from childhood, in the minds of individuals, norms and interdictions. In addition, aggressiveness is inhibited by courtesy rules, which are pacification rites, greetings, compliments, anodyne words (MORIN, 2007d, p. 118).

History recounts periods in which the delirium and aggressiveness of human beings interfered in the life of the Planet and in the destiny of humanity itself. Intelligence allied to madness/delirium promoted the

complete decimation of peoples and cultures, ideological, political and religious wars. The risk of new barbarities remains alive, as does the possibility of overcoming human dementia. The dialogic *sapiens-demens* it is an adventure that has only just begun. For this reason, the waking state must be continuous, because “wherever the *homo* continues to pretend to be *sapiens*, where *homo faber* and *homo economicus* rule, barbarism is always ready to reappear” (MORIN, 2007d, p 117).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Analyzing the influence of education on human development means understanding that the purpose of education cannot be limited to equipping the individual, that is, preparing him for the world of work, but understanding that human development cannot be limited. only to the economic world, since man is complex, and in him there are needs that go beyond the economic frontier.

Thus, education, in addition to the economic character, must nurture man in an ethical, human way (humanization of man). It is true that scientific understanding is crucial for man to be able to equate the essential problems of life, however, ethical knowledge, solidary learning, the practice of altruism, knowing how to live and being part of the Earth are, according to Edgar Morin, as primordial as the material essence of life.

In this sense, education appears as one of the determining social elements for man to develop in such a way that he can live on the Planet with ethical responsibility, lucidity of thought and prepared to confront present and future uncertainties.

To this end, it is essential that the principles on which education is based are in accordance with ethics, democracy, solidarity between humans and other living beings, so that they meet the desires and needs of society, mainly, teach man to live and inhabit the Earth.

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